

**Dear Title III Directors,**

With the new changes in state assessment cut scores and the implementation of the common core standards, I am certain you have been proactive in planning how to bring your English Learners program up to par with these high expectations. In addition to implementing research-based best practices, please consider establishing seamless articulation between your alternative language program, your Title III program and all other supplemental funds such as general funds, Title I A, 31a, Title III and Great Start.

**Fiscal Responsibility:**

Your final allocations for immigrant and LEP are posted on the website. Specific allowable activities for both are posted in MEGS within the budget section- click the "help" button. Please draw down funds in a pattern commensurate with your program implementation. Good drawdowns and small carry-over is one indicator of sound program implementation which reduces the factors contributing to a risk status. The Function Code document is helpful in verifying which activities are allowable. You must be on the budget page in the MEGS-Title III section in order to access the Help Page where the function codes are located. **Deadline for submitting your Title III application and amendments is December 15, 2011.**

**Professional Development:**

Fall Conference--Our office team has been reflecting upon the recent Special Populations conference and has started to plan topics for next fall's conference taking place on September 17 and 18, 2012 at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing. We urge you to send us your suggested topics and presenters. Power point presentations and other 2011 conference documents will soon be posted on the website at [www.michigan.gov/ofs](http://www.michigan.gov/ofs). Scroll down to programs and click on Special Populations Conference.

SIOP--In collaboration with Great Lakes East and the Center for Applied Linguistics, we are pleased to offer another round of SIOP Train the Trainer workshops. If you are interested in sending some of your staff, please contact me. Applications will be sent to you in a separate email.

**Accelerating Student Achievement:**

AMAOs--The Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) are being calculated by the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (BAA) and results **will be sent to you** within a couple of weeks. We hope that all of you will meet the targets. However, our team will be following up with districts who did not meet **one or more** of the three AMAOs for two or more years. The website link found below has explanations of the AMAOs and samples of notification letters to parents. Reminder that:

*Progress Targets (AMAO 1):*

2010–2011: 77% of students gaining 4 or more points  
2011–2012: 79% of students gaining 4 or more points  
2012–2013: 81% of students gaining 4 or more points

*Proficiency targets (AMAO 2):*

2010–2011: 13% of students proficient or advanced

2011–2012: 16% of students proficient or advanced  
2012–2013: 20% of students proficient or advanced

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AMAO 3):**

The LEP subgroup must make adequate yearly progress to achieve AMAO 3.

**AMAO Consequences**

Districts that do not meet one or more of the AMAOs must comply with a series of consequences which vary depending on the number of consecutive years the district missed an AMAO.

After the first year:

- A letter must be sent to parents of Title III-funded LEP students, within 30 days, explaining that the district did not meet one or more of the AMAO targets and it must provide the parents with the district's plan to meet the targets in future years. A sample letter can be found by clicking the AMAO link on the left side at [www.michigan.gov/oeaa](http://www.michigan.gov/oeaa)
- The district must develop a Title III program improvement plan to specifically address the factors that prevented the district from meeting its annual objectives. The Office of Field Services team at the Michigan Department of Education will provide technical assistance regarding the Title III Improvement plan for serving LEP students.

After two consecutive years:

- Letter to parents of Title III-funded LEP students (same as year 1)
- Continued implementation of Title III improvement plan
- The Office of Field Services will contact you regarding implementation of the district's plan.

After three consecutive years:

- Letter to parents of Title III-funded LEP students (same as year 1)
- Revision and implementation of the district's Title III improvement plan
- The Office of Field Services will contact you regarding implementation of the district's plan.

After four consecutive years:

- Letter to parents of Title III-funded LEP students (same as year 1)
- The district is required by the Michigan Department of Education to change its method of delivery, replace staff responsible for the district's failure to meet AMAOs, and may experience the loss of Title III funding.
- The Office of Field Services will contact you regarding implementation of the district's plan.

Sample notification letters to parents, and information on how to appeal your AMAO status can be found at: [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/AMAO\\_Parent\\_notification\\_letter\\_332285\\_7.doc](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/AMAO_Parent_notification_letter_332285_7.doc)

**Program Improvement:**

1. Self-Assessment Checklist--In the past, our office expected you to complete the Title III Self-Assessment Checklist and submit it to us annually. Since we are starting a three year cycle for all of our special populations programs, we are asking you to submit the Self-Assessment Checklist (see attachment) to us by December 30, 2011 ONLY if one of the following applies:

- a) You did not email the Checklist to us during the 2009/2010 or 2010/2011 school year;

- b) The district has experienced significant programmatic changes, hopefully improvements, in the Title III program;
- c) We have scheduled an on-site visit or desk review for your district.

We are verifying your past submissions and will provide you advance notice if you're scheduled for an on site visit during the 2011/2012, or if you have not submitted your Checklist during the past two years.

2. Program Evaluation--One of the requirements under Title III is to conduct a biennial program evaluation. Also, the EL professional development and parent engagement programs need to have an evaluation component. Our office formed a cross-department committee and facilitated creating a Program Evaluation Tool that is easy to follow and implement (see attachment). Several schools and districts expressed interest in piloting the tool and we are providing training on December 13 at the Lansing Community College West. If you'd like to pilot the tool with us and receive adequate support during the piloting, let me know at your earliest convenience so we can plan for an additional training day.

3. Monitoring--We have started our on-site visits for the 2011-2012 school year and have followed several formats to complete the review process:

- 1. Joining a regional consultants' team and reviewing several federal programs;
- 2. Conducting on-site reviews of two or more Special Populations programs such as Title III, section 31a, Title I C, Homeless or Title I D during a 2-3 day visit;
- 3. Conducting an independent Title III visit and invite a regional consultant to join our team.

I attended a Title III directors' meeting at USED and was informed that Michigan will most likely be audited during the 2012-2013 school year. The USED team will select several districts and schools to visit as part of the review process. MDE does not determine which districts /consortia are selected. I will notify you of the dates once we receive official notification.

4. Early intervention--During the 2010-2011 school year, we reminded you that EL preschoolers enrolled in elementary school preschool programs, such as Great Start Readiness Program or Head Start, are eligible for Title III funds if you provide them with second language acquisition programs. If you need additional assistance in starting services for your preschool ELs, please contact me.

5. Parent Engagement--MDE developed a **Parent Engagement Toolkit** that includes a synthesis of research studies, and practical resources for parents and schools. It is available on the MDE website at [http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-6530\\_30334\\_51051-262889--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-6530_30334_51051-262889--,00.html) The document is within the Parent and Family section of the MDE website. The 'Parent Resources' section is being translated into Spanish and Arabic and will be posted on the same website link by the end of December.

6. Technical Assistance--During the current school year, we will provide additional technical assistance regarding several program and fiduciary requirements we addressed and shared at the Special

Populations Conference in September. The support will be provided in collaboration with ISDs via face to face meetings, webinars, video conferencing, and workshops. Topics will include the following:

1. The Title III plan and how it fits into the District Improvement Plan/School Improvement Plans and the LEA planning Cycle. Specific examples of objectives, strategies and activities will be shared.
2. Common statewide entrance and exit criteria for English Learners. How to use the home language survey. Using ELPA and other recommended reading and math assessments to determine eligibility and placement with the EL program of services to ensure students function successfully in classrooms.
3. Appropriate procedures for documenting ELs on MSDS in order for students to be selected for funding, assessment and accountability reporting.
4. Allowable uses of Title III funds based on the function codes document posted on the OFS website.
5. The Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) and how to progress monitor students in order to meet each of the AMAOs.

#### **ELP and Common Core Standards:**

In order to develop new ELP standards and assessments aligned to the common core standards, Michigan joined California consortium when applying for a competitive ELP assessment grant last summer, but the grant award was given to Wisconsin Consortium/WIDA (World Class Instructional Design Assessment). Therefore, MI has two options:

- a. Work with the California consortium toward writing new common ELP standards and assessments, as well as develop training tools and resources. **This would** require finding other funding sources to cover cost of the development of these new standards and assessments; or
- b. Join the Wisconsin Consortium and adopt their current World Class Instructional Design (WIDA) ELP standards and assessments which includes assessments for ELs with disabilities. The Wisconsin consortium has already developed training tools and resources and has aligned their ELP assessment to the common core/career and college standards. We have sought input from the Title III Advisory Committee and will keep you informed as OFS and BAA reach a joint decision concerning which consortium MI will join.

#### **Two-way Communication:**

Please remember that any questions regarding Title III and EL program should be directed to our office consultants and we will gladly address them in a timely manner. Such topics include procedures for completing the home language survey, eligibility for services, identification and coding of LEP/EL students, their placement, services and exit procedures. Also, questions regarding alternative program services, parent engagement of EL parents, professional development, Title III plans and consequences of not meeting AMAOs are within our realm of responsibility and oversight. Please direct questions that pertain to ELPA test administration procedures, interpretation of reports and piloting on-line assessments, AMAOs and AYP calculations, and appeals to the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (BAA).

### **Accuracy of LEP Coding and Reporting:**

During the past year, the Office of Field Services has worked closely with you to ensure that English Language Learners are identified properly and their Limited English Proficient (LEP) information is reported in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) timely and accurately. These collaborative efforts have been successful and have resulted in improved data reporting for LEP funding and program participation. When comparing 2010-2011 MSDS data against data submitted in the Fall 2011 MSDS General Collection, a number of students have been identified in most districts where:

- the student was designated as LEP Eligible in 2010-2011;
- was not exited as proficient (code 50) during the 2010-2011 school year, and;
- was not re-reported as LEP Eligible in the Fall 2011 MSDS General Collection.

Students meeting these criteria are categorized as “*Historical LEP*”. The only federally-approved reason for exiting a student from LEP Eligibility is when the student meets the definition for LEP proficiency. All other LEP Eligible students remain LEP Eligible and will be flagged as *Historical LEP* if not re-reported as LEP the following school year.

We have received many questions and scenarios regarding the correspondence sent on December 1, 2011. We appreciate your concerns and commitment to accuracy. Students who are new to a district during the 2011-12 school year and were identified on the “*Historical LEP*” report must have their LEP status maintained until the Spring 2012 ELPA. Students may then be exited using the district’s exit criteria which would include the 2012 ELPA results. If a student is found to have met the district’s exit criteria including ELPA for the previous year but were not coded with an exit date, at this point, they will need to be coded as LEP for the 2011-12 school-year, provided services, and assessed on the Spring 2012 ELPA.

Please remember that exit code 54 does not exit the student from the EL program. It simply moves the LEP student to another program such as special education. By law, OCR and Title III, such student is still eligible for both services. Therefore, accurate initial assessment of EL students with disabilities, where a team of special and ESL/bilingual educators collaborate throughout the referral and placement process, is critical. The IEPC is the entity that determines at the **onset** if such students need both programs or not. Once the student is placed as a LEP, services are provided until the student reaches proficiency, meeting the district’s exit criteria. This situation is a national challenge and a joint guidance from Title III and Special Education USED offices may be forthcoming.

Parent exit (52) does not change a LEP to a FLEP and, therefore, such students must continue to be assessed, funded and reported as LEP until they meet district/state criteria. I suggest that you add a statement to the parent waiver/exit form informing parents in advance that the student will still be participate in state assessments (ELPA, MEAP/MME) even if parents have requested removal from EL services. An LEP student is exited (changed from LEP to FLEP) only after meeting the district’s exit criteria using code 50: Student scored in the proficient range on the ELP test and met district exit criteria.

I urge you to ensure that ALL LEP/EL students are properly identified and designated at all times, and exiting is done by the end of year collection deadline. Many districts are receiving ELs from other districts lacking adequate accompanying documents that include such designation and assessment results. Therefore, not knowing if a student is LEP or not, the receiving districts may not maintain these students' statuses as LEP nor serve them. The result is disruption of instructional support and adverse impact on student language acquisition and academic achievement. When students are split between two districts within a school year, both districts are funded by MDE and have the moral obligation for these students' academic achievement. Please collaborate in sending all pertinent information with your students or by contacting the receiving districts to ensure the information is provided and student transition is smooth.

On behalf of the Title III/EL team, Oralia Cooper and Michelle Williams, I wish you a productive school year and will continue to provide you with program updates as well as dates for upcoming professional development opportunities whose purpose is to build local capacity and accelerate student achievement.

Best Regards,

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